

REMARKS

The Applicant thanks the Examiner for his attention to this case and for his comments thereon. Amendments have been effected to the claims to further clarify the nature of the present invention and to amend a typographical error. However, these amendments have not added new subject matter to the application.

The present invention relates to an application framework with multiple levels of functionality which may or may not be visible to the user. A process level guides a user through a workflow to apply a set of defined process steps associated with a set of activities. The activities comprise their own level of functionality which modify a data set through applying the processing of the activities to create an output data set. A sub-process level aggregates the activities to be applied in the process level.

The Examiner has rejected Claims 4-51 under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,144,962 to Weinberg et al. (hereinafter Weinberg).

Claim 4 recites a framework comprising:

(a) a process level for selecting a set of defined process steps associated with a set of activities to be applied to a data set;

(b) a sub-process level including an aggregation of selected activities from said set of activities, said sub-process level for facilitating navigation between ones of said selected activities; and

(c) an activity level including at least one activity from said set of activities; wherein said at least one activity having a property in said data set that is modified as a result of the applied processing of said activity level to produce an output data set.

Weinberg describes a website scanning routine to gather information about the content objects and links of a website via a network connection. Mapping routines use this information to generate, on the computer's display screen, a graphical site map that shows the overall architecture of the Web site. Weinberg also describes a user interface allowing the user to perform actions such as zooming, panning, and filtering. The user can even view a

comparison map highlighting changes made to the Web site since a previous mapping. Clearly Weinberg intends to provide a mapping tool for display and analysis allowing the user the option to view further information on each data object.

The Applicant believes that the Examiner has improperly equated Weinberg's Astra framework recited in column 8, lines 9-20 to the Applicant's process level (part (a) recited in Claim 4). Part (a) of Claim 4 has been rearranged to clarify that the defined process steps are associated with a set of activities to be applied to a data set. A process step is generally a step in which an action is taken on something and in this case, the process is the modification of a part of the data set according to the activity related to the step.

The passage from Weinberg relied upon by the Examiner does not teach manipulating the data presented in the graphical display, in fact Weinberg specifically says on lines 16-17 of column 8: "...to manipulate the display of the site map, and to display their own respective data...". Applicant believes that the Examiner has equated "manipulate the display" of Weinberg with the "process steps" of part (a) recited in Claim 4. Weinberg clearly does not intend to manipulate the content objects, only the way in which they are displayed. In fact, modifying these objects would alter the display mapping thereby creating inconsistencies in the mapping, assumed to not be an intention of the user interaction described by Weinberg.

The user described by Weinberg interacts with the framework for visual and analytical purposes. The Examiner also refers to column 19, line 23-40 which only further supports the Applicant's belief that the Astra framework merely provides the opportunity for the user to perform operations for altering the display and does not modify the objects in the display. In fact, on lines 27-29 Weinberg states: "...including attributes which specify how the respective objects is to be represented graphically within the site map.". Clearly the user only interacts with the framework to alter the display. It would require a major departure from Weinberg's intentions if one were to equate this to step (a) recited in Claim 4.

The Examiner has also equated the Applicant's sub-process level (step (b) recited in Claim 4) which facilitates the navigation between the aggregation of the activities with Weinberg's map navigation citing the passage of column 8, lines 32-67. Applicant believes that the Examiner has improperly equated these elements due to the presence of the word

“navigation”. The Applicant’s framework applies activities associated with process steps wherein the activities are part of a workflow and as such, the activities may be applied at different locations. Accordingly, navigation in this sense refers to the movement of the workflow from one activity to the next. In the teachings of Weinberg, navigation refers to the movement through a mapping of locations and not movement between the actual locations in the mapping. This further exemplifies that website content objects are not analogous to the Applicant’s activities. In fact, if navigation in Weinberg was analogous to that recited in step (b) of Claim 4, the user would be moving from one site object to the next thereby eliminating the higher level mapping which shows the interconnections between the site objects. As such, it is believed that the sub-process level is quite contrary to website navigation and therefore the two elements cannot reasonably be equated. The other passages cited by the Examiner further exemplify this fact.

The Examiner has also equated the Applicant’s activity level with the capabilities of the Astra framework to change the display properties. The Examiner has cited column 10, lines 1-33 in his rejection. Weinberg, in this passage, goes into detail describing various zoom procedures allowing the user to focus on one particular area of the site map as well as double-click procedures for viewing an object’s content information. The Applicant’s activity level involves applying properties of the activities to modify the data set to create an output data set. The Applicant believes that although the user in Weinberg is using various optional features of the Astra framework, this clearly cannot be equated to manipulating a data set. In fact, it has been argued above that the Applicant’s activities manipulate the actual data, wherein Weinberg teaches manipulating display options. Display options aid in mapping, process steps (applying activities in a specified order) actually manipulate the data. As such, these operations are not analogous but actually quite contrary as they ultimately achieve different goals.

Therefore, it is submitted that the teachings of Weinberg differ quite substantially from what has been recited in Claim 4. The Examiner, it is believed, has improperly equated the manipulation of data sets with optional display properties and has improperly equated the navigation of a graphical mapping with the navigation between successive steps in a process. The teachings of Weinberg, therefore, describe different intentions for using differing components used in a significantly different manner compared to that recited in Claim 4.

Accordingly, it is believed that Claim 4 clearly and patentably distinguishes over Weinberg and as such, is in condition for allowance. Claims 5 to 32 are either directly or indirectly dependent upon Claim 4 and are therefore believed to distinguish over Weinberg. The Applicant wishes to note that Claim 17 has been amended to correct a typographical error.


Claim 33, as recognized by the Examiner, is a method claim of Claim 4, thus the same arguments as per Claim 4 apply to Claim 33.

Accordingly, it is believed that Claim 33 clearly distinguishes over Weinberg and as such, is in condition for allowance. Claims 34 to 51 are either directly or indirectly dependent upon Claim 4 and are therefore believed to distinguish over Weinberg.

Applicants request early reconsideration and allowance of the present application.

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